



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Idaho Panhandle National Forests

St Joe Ranger District  
222 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St, Suite 1  
St Maries, ID 83861

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**File Code:** 1950

**Date:** September 28, 2020

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

The Emerald environmental assessment (EA) is now available for review and comment. This letter initiates the 30-day EA comment period. Work was completed by a Forest Service Interdisciplinary Team in coordination with the St. Joe Ranger District. Please respond with any comments regarding the proposed actions.

You are being notified of this opportunity for comment because you responded to the initial scoping, expressed interest in land management projects on the Idaho Panhandle National Forests, or have signed up as a subscriber online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54817>.

### **60 Day Notification of Openings Greater than 40 Acres**

Vegetation management would include timber harvest on approximately 2,323 acres, creating openings greater than 40 acres in size. The Forest intends to request approval for openings larger than 40 acres in size from the Regional Forester. Notice of that intent is also given in the legal notice preceding this letter and EA.

### **Request for Comments**

To reduce costs, reduce environmental impacts, and further outreach planning information, the Idaho Panhandle National Forests have moved to electronic mailing lists for all our NEPA projects. To take advantage of electronic delivery, you may subscribe for project updates using the link provided above.

We would like to encourage your participation during the EA comment period. Those interested in or affected by this proposal have an opportunity to make their concerns known prior to a decision being made by the responsible official, St. Joe District Ranger, Matthew Davis. To be most effective, please provide your comments within the 30-day comment period. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record, and will be available for public inspection. Those who respond to this invitation for comments will be notified when a decision is made.

The goal of public participation is to ensure that Forest Service staff consider all aspects of a project and the affected environment in order to make informed decisions. Comments best serve this goal when they provide evidence directly related to the proposed activities and environmental analysis. Comments which result in changes to the proposal or the development of new alternatives, lead to factual corrections, or require additional or new analysis are most welcome. Comments should explain how any submitted sources of credible research would result in different outcomes, if the information provided is used in the analysis. The Forest Service prioritizes such comments for review and consideration.

Expressions of personal interest and values are important for the responsible official to consider. However, comments and literature which are vague, out of context, or global in nature do not help Forest Service staff make better, more informed decisions.

Please submit written comments by visiting the link above and using the links under "Get Connected" on the right-hand side of the page and clicking on "Comment". In keeping with precautionary measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the office is not open at this time for hand-delivered submissions. If you need to hand deliver your comments please call the District office to make arrangements or contact Chandra Neils.

The proposed project was originally advertised on September 28, 2018 (Coeur d'Alene Press legal notice) for a scoping period. The proposed project is subject to the objection process pursuant to the 36 CFR part 218. Individuals and entities who have submitted timely, specific written comments regarding a proposed project or activity during any designated opportunity for public comment may file an objection. For objection eligibility, each individual or representative from each entity must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request. In cases involving an electronic message, a scanned signature is one way to provide verification. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period and ensure that their comments have been received.

For more information, please contact Chandra Neils ([chandra.neils@usda.gov](mailto:chandra.neils@usda.gov)) or the St. Joe Ranger District (208-245-2531), or visit our project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54817>.

Thank you for your continued participation in projects involving Idaho Panhandle National Forest lands.

Sincerely,



Matthew A. Davis  
District Ranger  
St Joe Ranger District